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## **President Bush OK'd spying in America**

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**18 December, 2005**

## **THE ARTICLE**

### **President Bush OK'd spying in America**

In his regular address to the nation on Saturday, President George W. Bush confirmed reports that he authorized and condoned spying in the USA. He admitted to recently-surfaced allegations that he had signed a secret order in the wake of the September 11 attack on the World Trade Center, authorizing the surveillance of phone calls and e-mails without obtaining court orders. He reiterated his belief that spying is a "vital tool" in keeping America free from terrorist attack and that his authorization was and is "critical to saving American lives." He added: "The American people expect me to do everything in my power, under our laws and Constitution, to protect them and their civil liberties and that is exactly what I will continue to do as long as I am President of the United States."

His confession has sparked outrage among libertarians for violating civil liberties. Senator Edward Kennedy stated Mr. Bush's tactics were "Big Brother run amok". Senator Russell Feingold admonished the President for abusing his power. "I tell you, he's President Bush, not King Bush," he said. Another senator said the "shocking revelation... ought to send a chill down the spine of every American". Mr. Bush said the surveillance program was narrow in scope and "consistent with US law." He said it is used only to intercept the messages of those with "a clear link to al-Qaeda". The President also criticized the leaking of the information to the media, saying: "This is a highly classified program that is crucial to our national security."

## WARM-UPS

**1. 007:** You are now a secret agent. You are working on a top-secret mission for your government. Talk to the other “spies” in your class about your job and your life. What dangers do you face at work? What do you think of James Bond? What’s your favorite gadget? Introduce yourselves James Bond-style - “Hi. I’m Bond. James Bond”.

**2. CIVIL LIBERTIES:** What civil liberties are important to you? How would you feel if your civil liberties were abused or violated by others? How would you feel if your civil liberties were abused or violated by your government? Talk about this with your partner(s), with reference to this list of civil liberties:

- The right to criticize your leaders
- Privacy of mail and phone calls
- Freedom of speech
- The right to a fair trial
- The right to marry a partner of choice
- The choice of using certain drugs
- Freedom to practice any religion
- The right to not carry an identity card

**3. CHAT:** In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words are most interesting and which are most boring.

*Address / spying / allegations / secret orders / surveillance / laws / constitutions / confessions / civil liberties / kings / spines / al-Qaeda / media / national security*

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

**4. SECRET AGENTS:** In pairs / groups, discuss the merits and demerits of the following types of secret agent. Which ones do you think would be exciting or dull? Which ones would you like to do?

- a. Infiltrating and becoming a member of an enemy army.
- b. Placing phone taps and listening bugs in the homes of suspected baddies.
- c. The surveillance of known terrorists (following them in your car).
- d. Undercover agent - Seeking information from locals in the “enemy” country.
- e. Photographing top-secret documents in the “enemy’s” embassy / consulates.
- f. Mission Impossible – kidnapping government members of the “enemy” country.

**5. SPYING OPINIONS:** Discuss these opinions with your partner(s).

- a. A president can use any spying tactics in the interests of national security.
- b. People who complain about President Bush hate freedom.
- c. Spying prevents dying. It’s thousands of years old. All countries do it.
- d. Newspapers who leak classified government information are unpatriotic.
- e. Our civil liberties take second place to the War on Terror.
- f. Spying saved the world from communism and fascism. We need it.
- g. We already have enough civil liberties. A little spying doesn’t harm them.
- h. A country’s leader must unerringly follow the law / constitution at all times.

**6. SPY:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word “spy”. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

## **BEFORE READING / LISTENING**

**1. TRUE / FALSE:** Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| a. President Bush said he gave senators' addresses to the CIA and FBI.    | T / F |
| b. Bush authorized telephone surveillance without obtaining court orders. | T / F |
| c. Mr. Bush said spying in the USA was a vital tool to protect America.   | T / F |
| d. Mr. Bush said he would stop all surveillance on American soil.         | T / F |
| e. A Democrat senator said President Bush needed a big brother.           | T / F |
| f. Another senator said Americans should have a chill down their spine.   | T / F |
| g. Bush said he wanted to intercept his political opponents' messages.    | T / F |
| h. Mr. Bush criticized the leaking of the information to the media.       | T / F |

**2. SYNONYM MATCH:** Match the following synonyms from the article:

- |                |               |
|----------------|---------------|
| a. address     | state control |
| b. condoned    | aftermath     |
| c. wake        | said again    |
| d. reiterated  | seize         |
| e. power       | trampling on  |
| f. violating   | top secret    |
| g. Big Brother | speech        |
| h. admonished  | authority     |
| i. intercept   | berated       |
| j. classified  | allowed       |

**3. PHRASE MATCH:** Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- |                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| a. regular address                    | that spying is a "vital tool"            |
| b. Bush confirmed reports that he     | down the spine of every American         |
| c. in the wake                        | as long as I am President                |
| d. He reiterated his belief           | to the nation                            |
| e. exactly what I will continue to do | run amok                                 |
| f. sparked outrage                    | that is crucial to our national security |
| g. Big Brother                        | the messages of those...                 |
| h. send a chill                       | among libertarians                       |
| i. used only to intercept             | authorized and condoned spying           |
| j. a highly classified program        | of the September 11 attack               |

## WHILE READING / LISTENING

**GAP FILL:** Put the words in the column on the right into the gaps in the text.

### President Bush OK'd spying in America

In his regular \_\_\_\_\_ to the nation on Saturday, President George W. Bush confirmed reports that he authorized and \_\_\_\_\_ spying in the USA. He admitted to recently-\_\_\_\_\_ allegations that he had signed a secret order in the \_\_\_\_\_ of the September 11 attack on the World Trade Center, authorizing the surveillance of phone calls and e-mails without \_\_\_\_\_ court orders. He reiterated his belief that spying is a "vital tool" in keeping America free from terrorist attack and that his authorization was and is "\_\_\_\_\_ to saving American lives." He added: "The American people expect me to do everything in my \_\_\_\_\_, under our laws and Constitution, to protect them and their civil liberties and that is \_\_\_\_\_ what I will continue to do as long as I am President of the United States."

His \_\_\_\_\_ has sparked outrage among \_\_\_\_\_ for violating civil liberties. Senator Edward Kennedy stated Mr. Bush's tactics were "Big Brother run \_\_\_\_\_". Senator Russell Feingold admonished the President for abusing his power. "I tell you, he's President Bush, not \_\_\_\_\_ Bush," he said. Another senator said the "shocking \_\_\_\_\_ ... ought to send a chill down the \_\_\_\_\_ of every American". Mr. Bush said the surveillance program was narrow in scope and "consistent with US law." He said it is used only to \_\_\_\_\_ the messages of those with "a clear link to al-Qaeda". The President also criticized the leaking of the information to the media, saying: "This is a highly classified program that is \_\_\_\_\_ to our national security."

wake  
power  
condoned  
critical  
address  
exactly  
surfaced  
obtaining

spine  
amok  
libertarians  
crucial  
revelation  
confession  
King  
intercept

## **LISTENING**

Listen and fill in the spaces.

### **President Bush OK'd spying in America**

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His confession has \_\_\_\_\_ outrage among libertarians for violating civil liberties. Senator Edward Kennedy stated Mr. Bush's tactics were "Big Brother \_\_\_\_\_". Senator Russell Feingold \_\_\_\_\_ the President for abusing his power. "I tell you, he's President Bush, not King Bush," he said. Another senator said the "shocking revelation... ought to send a \_\_\_\_\_ down the \_\_\_\_\_ of every American". Mr. Bush said the surveillance program was narrow in scope and "consistent with US law." He said it is used only to \_\_\_\_\_ the messages of those with "a clear link to al-Qaeda". The President also criticized the \_\_\_\_\_ of the information to the media, saying: "This is a highly classified program that is \_\_\_\_\_ to our national security."

## **AFTER READING / LISTENING**

**1. WORD SEARCH:** Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words **'secret'** and **'order'**.

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS:** Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**3. GAP FILL:** In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

**4. VOCABULARY:** Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

**5. STUDENT "SPYING" SURVEY:** In pairs / groups, write down questions about spying, state security and civil liberties.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

**6. TEST EACH OTHER:** Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

- |            |           |
|------------|-----------|
| • address  | • sparked |
| • surfaced | • brother |
| • court    | • king    |
| • critical | • spine   |
| • power    | • link    |
| • long     | • crucial |

## **DISCUSSION**

### STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- b. What do you think of spying?
- c. From what you read, do you think President Bush has done anything wrong?
- d. Are you surprised governments intercept phone and e-mail messages without first obtaining court orders?
- e. How would you feel if your government monitored your phone messages and e-mails?
- f. Is there an element of Big Brother in your country?
- g. Do you think ID cards and street surveillance cameras encroach on your civil liberties?
- h. Do you think George Bush has a good record on upholding civil liberties?
- i. What do you think of the "President Bush...King Bush" statement?
- j. When was the last time a chill went down your spine?

### STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What do you think about what you read?
- c. Which is more important, civil liberties or national security?
- d. Why do you think American politicians are so angry over this?
- e. Do you think presidents and prime ministers can act above the law if national security depends on it?
- f. Do you think newspapers that report such confidential information threaten national security?
- g. Are you happy with the civil liberties you have or would you like more?
- h. Do you think the US Government might be intercepting non-al-Qaeda related calls and mails?
- i. Do you trust the leaders of your country?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

**AFTER DISCUSSION:** Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- b. Was there a question you didn't like?
- c. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- d. What did you like talking about?
- e. Which was the most difficult question?



## **SPEAKING**

**SPYING ROLE PLAY:** Should George W. Bush call a halt to spying in the US? Team up with classmates who have been assigned the same role to develop your roles and discuss ideas and “strategies” before the role play begins. Introduce yourself to the other role players.

### **Role A – GEORGE W. BUSH**

You know what’s best for your country. You have top-secret information about terrorist attacks that would petrify and panic your nation. You know it is essential to act above the law to save the USA. You are prepared to risk your job to protect your fellow citizens. Your job is to protect world freedom. The spying has already saved thousands of innocent people from harm.

THINK OF MORE REASONS WHY THE SPYING SHOULD CONTINUE.

### **Role B – CIVIL LIBERTARIAN**

You are outraged that Bush has again taken the law into his own hands. He continually abuses the power of the Presidency. He uses the War on Terror to do whatever he wants. He is corrupt. His colleagues are corrupt. If he stays in office, freedom, civil liberties and democracy will suffer. He has already taken away many freedoms from the people of the world.

THINK OF MORE REASONS WHY GEORGE BUSH SHOULD RESIGN.

### **Role C – PRO-BUSH PERSON**

You think George W. Bush is the greatest American for decades. You admire his courage. You support his every action. Without George W. Bush, the world would be a dangerous place. Mr. Bush respects of all nationalities and religion. The spying is essential to keep al-Qaeda from taking more lives.

THINK OF MORE REASONS WHY MR. BUSH SHOULD HAVE MORE POWER.

### **Role D – ANTI-BUSH PERSON**

You are fed up with Mr. Bush. He lied about WMD in Iraq. He lied about winning the war in Iraq. The world is a more dangerous place because of him. His government is full of corruption. His extreme nationalism is offensive to all other nations in the world. He is the most dangerous person on Earth. The spying is a small part of the danger he poses to freedom.

THINK OF MORE REASONS WHY PRESIDENT BUSH MUST RESIGN.

Change roles and repeat the role play. Comment in groups about the differences between the two role plays.

Discuss whether or not the spying should stop immediately.

## **HOMEWORK**

**1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

**2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find more information on the spying scandal. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson. Did you all find out similar things?

**3. CIVIL LIBERTIES:** Make a poster outlining the civil liberties that are an important part of your country's way of life. Include a section about what other civil liberties you feel your country should legislate for. Show your poster to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all write about similar things?

**4. LETTER:** Write a letter to US President George W. Bush. Tell him what you think of the spying issue. Give him advice on what to do about it from now. Show what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Did everyone write about similar things? Did you all have the same advice?

## ANSWERS

### TRUE / FALSE:

- a. F      b. T      c. T      d. F      e. F      f. T      g. F      h. T

### SYNONYM MATCH:

- |                |               |
|----------------|---------------|
| a. address     | speech        |
| b. condoned    | allowed       |
| c. wake        | aftermath     |
| d. reiterated  | said again    |
| e. power       | authority     |
| f. violating   | trampling on  |
| g. Big Brother | state control |
| h. admonished  | berated       |
| i. intercept   | seize         |
| j. classified  | top secret    |

### PHRASE MATCH:

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| f. sparked outrage                    | among libertarians                       |
| g. Big Brother                        | run amok                                 |
| h. send a chill                       | down the spine of every American         |
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### GAP FILL:

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